

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 0158

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NARR, EWWT, IC
SUBJECT: VISIT OF EUR/NE DIRECTOR TO ICELAND: MEETING WITH FOREIGN
MINISTER; SEA TRANSPORT BETWEEN U.S. AND ICELAND

REF: (A) REYKJAVIK 0133; (B) STATE 16008

1. AFTER REVIEWING TERMINAL QUESTION AND OTHER ITEMS WITH
FUNSETH AND AMBASSADOR BLAKE DURING JANUARY 26 MEETING,
(REF A), FOREIGN MINISTER SAID HE WISHED TO TOUCH BRIEFLY
ON CURRENT SHIPPING COMPETITION BETWEEN EIMSKIP AND BIFROST
(CAR FERRY) FOR DEFENSE FORCE CARGO. MINISTER NOTED THAT
EIMSKIP DIRECTOR MOLLER CALLED ON HIM LAST DECEMBER AND
ASKED FOR ASSISTANCE FROM ICELANDIC EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON
IN SUPPORT OF EIMSKIP'S EFFORTS TO CONTINUE CARRYING DE-
FENSE FORCE CARGO. AGUSTSSON SAID HE TOLD MOLLER THAT
ICELANDIC EMBASSY WOULD BE HAPPY TO COMPLY BUT ADDED THAT
HE GAVE MOLLER THOSE ASSURANCES WITHOUT REALIZING THAT EIMSKIP
WAS FACING COMPETITION FROM ANOTHER ICELANDIC CARRIER.
AGUSTSSON INFORMED FUNSETH AND AMBASSADOR HIS MAIN CONCERN
IS THAT AN ICELANDIC SHIPPING COMPANY CONTINUE TO
CARRY DEFENSE FORCE BUSINESS AND HE PERSONALLY IS
NOT OTHERWISE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED WHICH COMPANY
IT MIGHT BE. HE SAID EIMSKIP HAD HAD THE BUSINESS
FOR MANY YEARS AND ALTHOUGH EIMSKIP IS NOT STATE
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OWNED, GOI IS MINORITY SHAREHOLDER IN THE COMPANY.
THUS, HE NOTED, IF ALL OTHER THINGS WERE EQUAL, GOI
MIGHT EVENTUALLY FAVOR PREFERENCE IN CARGO HAULING
BEING GIVEN TO EIMSKIP. HOWEVER, FOR THE TIME BEING,
AGUSTSSON SAID HE COULD NOT REALLY SAY WHAT GOI
POSITION WAS AND HE WOULD THEREFORE REFRAIN FROM ASKING
THAT ONE ICELANDIC COMPANY BE GIVEN PREFERENCE OVER

THE OTHER. AS SOON AS ANY DECISION HAD BEEN REACHED
HE WOULD LET EMBASSY KNOW.
BLAKE

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NNN

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